

sion and sacrifice in time of peace. We have seen the around-the-clock flights of the Berlin airlift. We saw you in Mig Alley in Korea. We saw the longest humanitarian airlift in history during the war in Bosnia. We saw you in the skies over Baghdad in Desert Storm. And just a few days ago, we saw the nine crewmembers of the C-141 perish off the coast of Africa after carrying a team of experts to help support our demining efforts in Namibia.

We have seen you rise to the challenges of our time, from the development of the air expeditionary forces that give me an invaluable tool in time of crisis, to last week's deployment of Commando Solo aircraft to help prevent the enemies of peace in Bosnia from sabotaging the Dayton agreement.

We have seen your vision and commitment to excel as you sharpen your technological edge to dominate the battlefields of the future. And perhaps most important, we see in the 12 outstanding Airmen of the Year the best traditions, the best hope, and the brightest future of the Air Force, the leadership and talent and dedication that make you second to none.

I want you to know on behalf of all Americans, I am proud of them and proud of all of you who serve in the United States Air Force. To the pilots, the flight crews, the Red Horse engineers, the technicians, the security police, the space and missile operators, all who contribute to the strength of America in the skies, and to all the families who support you, our Nation is profoundly grateful.

Today is a well-earned day of celebration for your golden legacy of achievement. But as you know better than anyone, there is never a day of rest. We pay tribute to the last 50 years with a determination to look to our Air Force men and women to help us meet the challenges of the next 50 years. We know we can always count on you; we always have. Aim high, and reach for new horizons.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the Courtyard at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Ralph Eberhart, USAF, Vice Chief of the Air Force; Maj. Gen. William J. Denlinger, USAF, Chief of Chaplains; and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Eric Benkin, USAF.

Statement on the Helicopter Tragedy in Bosnia-Herzegovina

September 18, 1997

I am deeply saddened by the deaths in Bosnia yesterday of five dedicated Americans serving the cause of peace. David Kriskovich, Deputy Commissioner of the International Police Task Force (IPTF); Leah Melnick, Human Rights Officer with the Office of the High Representative; Livio Beccaccio, Senior Advisor to Deputy Commissioner Kriskovich; Marvin Padgett, IPTF Training Coordinator and Police Monitors; and William Nesbitt, Bosnia Program Manager for the Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) perished when a UN helicopter crashed on its way from Sarajevo to Bugojno and Brcko.

Also lost in this tragic accident were five German citizens, including Ambassador Gerd Wagner, Senior Deputy High Representative, as well as a British and a Polish citizen.

These men and this woman were serving the cause of peace and reconciliation, dedicated to building under exceptionally difficult circumstances what was envisioned at Dayton almost 2 years ago. The selfless commitment of such talented people is inspiring. We are determined to carry forward their vital work.

My heartfelt sympathy is extended to the Kriskovich, Melnick, Beccaccio, Padgett, and Nesbitt families as well as the families of their colleagues. May they take comfort in the good works of their loved ones, for as the scripture tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Message to the Congress Transmitting Australia-United States Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty and Documentation

September 19, 1997

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and

the Government of Australia on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on April 30, 1997, and a related exchange of diplomatic notes signed the same date. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking offenses, terrorism and other violent crime, money laundering and other "white-collar" crime. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and other articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures and for restitution; immobilizing instrumentalities and proceeds of crime; assisting in proceedings related to forfeiture or confiscation; and rendering any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 18, 1997.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 19.

Statement on the Study by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence September 19, 1997

Today's study released by the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence confirms what we have known all along: that the Brady law is helping to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. The study also gives us more good

news about the Brady law—that it has worked to help disrupt illegal gun trafficking patterns, making it more difficult for gun traffickers to do business.

While States are no longer required to conduct Brady background checks in light of the Supreme Court's recent decision, I am pleased that State and local law enforcement agencies around the country are overwhelmingly continuing to do these checks on a voluntary basis. Our goal remains unchanged: no background check, no handgun purchase.

I have pledged to do everything in my power to make sure that we continue to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals—including extending Brady background checks to violent juveniles who should not be able to buy a gun on their 21st birthday. Today's study further makes the case that for the safety of our communities and of all Americans, Brady background checks must continue.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 15

In the afternoon, the President met in the Cabinet Room with leaders of environmental organizations to discuss climate change.

The White House announced that the President intends to nominate Gloria Tristani to be a member of the Federal Communications Commission.

September 16

In the morning, the President traveled to Langley, VA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Terrence J. Brown to be Assistant Administrator for Management at the Agency for International Development.